

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE TREASURERS

COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN (2012-2014)

PURPOSE/MISSION

To foster initiatives and mobilize resources to promote and enhance 529 plans, and to provide a forum for Network members to exchange information and ideas.

VISION

To be the leading national advocate for 529 plans to ensure that higher education is an affordable reality for all.

VALUES

- Integrity: CSPN members act in a manner that earns and justifies the trust of those we serve.
- Commitment: CSPN members passionately believe in the importance of saving for higher education.
- Professionalism: CSPN members are competent and ethical in the fulfillment of our duties and responsibilities.
- Innovation: CSPN members strive to identify and enhance opportunities to save for higher education.

CLIENTS/CUSTOMERS

(ordered according to the degree to which each directly depend upon CSPN's activities and support)

- Network membership (States; Corporate Affiliates)
- General Public
- NAST

Expectations

- Provide leadership, objective information, resources, and advice on 529 plans
- Act as the leading national advocate for strengthening and enhancing 529 plans
- Every network member will have an opportunity to participate and a voice in decision making
- Provide an open forum in which 529 plan issues & policies can be addressed & debated
- Develop consensus for positions, policies, & initiatives
- Provide training and professional development
- Respect individual State's 529 plans & autonomy

STAKEHOLDERS

(ordered according to the degree to which stakeholders, other than direct clients/customers, are impacted by or vested in CSPN's success or failure)

- Federal and State decision makers, including Congress, State legislatures, and regulators
- Business Partners
- Nonmember 529 plan entities and financial advisors
- Nonmember States (with 529 plans)

Expectations

- Provide information and advice on 529 plans
- Act as a national advocate for strengthening and enhancing 529 plans

STRENGTHS

(ordered according to the degree to which each is projected to be a significant strength during the period covered by this plan)

- Broad membership of State 529 plans and Corporate Affiliates within the Network
- Depth of experience and knowledge among members, staff, and legislative and public relations consultants
- Passionate commitment of members to the importance of saving for higher education
- Broad based talent, skills and expertise within the Network committees
- Opportunities for members to network and help each other
- Network leadership
- State Treasurer support within NAST for 529 plan initiatives and CSPN
- Collaborative participation by State and Corporate Affiliate members

WEAKNESSES

(ordered according to the degree to which each is projected to be a significant weakness during the period covered by this plan)

- Dependency upon the participation of a minority of Network members
- Governance structure inhibits rapid policy decisions and response capability

- Lack of consistent timely members' response to Network information requests hinders rapid response capability and communication strategy
- Limited funding and staffing for additional initiatives
- Perception by some State and Corporate Affiliate members that they are not valued members of the Network

OPPORTUNITIES

(ordered according to their potential emergence and impact on CSPN goals during the period covered by this plan)

- Increasing tuition and student debt affirm need for 529 plans
- Increased interest by families in the importance of saving for higher education
- Increased awareness and understanding of 529 plans by the public and Federal and State decision makers
- Capitalize upon increased media interest and CSPN resources to promote college savings through 529 plans and CSPN as the national authority on 529 plans
- Increased opportunities to work with other governmental agencies, financial groups, and businesses to strengthen awareness and use of 529 plans
- Potential for enhanced public advocacy for 529 plans due to personal experiences of participants

THREATS

(ordered according to their potential emergence and impact on CSPN goals during the period covered by this plan)

- Potential for adverse legislative, regulatory, and judicial decisions impacting 529 plans
- Uneven State oversight and control of 529 plans
- Economic uncertainties may slow 529 plan growth
- Emergence of some outside commercial interests in co-opting 529 plans
- Perception of under representation of low and middle income families in 529 plans
- Long-term viability of prepaid tuition plans
- State and program manager interests are not always aligned

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PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

- Impact on 529 plans
- Impact on the Network and its future
- Feasibility

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Strengthen the Network's role as the authoritative and objective national source for information on 529 plans
- Affirm the Network's role as the leading source to frame national policy affecting 529 plans
- Promote public awareness of the value of saving for higher education through 529 plans
- Increase Network engagement by a greater portion of its members

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Goals can be achieved within projected resources
- Each Executive Board member will actively participate in accomplishing at least one of the identified strategic goals of this plan
- Executive Board will review progress and consider changes to this strategic plan at least once per year
- Accomplishing this plan will require increased member engagement and support
- There will be ongoing communication with the Network membership reviewing the progress toward each of the identified strategic goals

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Goals	Objectives	Strategies
<p>G1: Enhance the Network’s capability to frame federal legislative and regulatory issues impacting 529 plans (ongoing).</p>	<p>(G1)OBJ 1: Annually develop and implement a plan that identifies and prioritizes federal legislative and regulatory initiatives enhancing 529 plans by the end of Nov.</p>	<p>S1: Develop and implement a plan that identifies and prioritizes federal initiatives enhancing 529 plans by the end of Nov of each year.</p> <p>S2: Utilize legislative consultant to identify and effectively respond to federal legislative and regulatory issues impacting 529 plans.</p>
	<p>(G1)OBJ 2: Establish rapid response structure and procedures by end of May 2012 to respond to unanticipated federal legislative, regulatory, and judicial actions.</p>	<p>S1: Re-energize and task the Federal Initiatives Committee to work with the legislative consultant to develop structures and procedures to create a rapid response capability by February 2012.</p> <p>S2: Gain CSPN Executive Board approval for proposed rapid response structures and procedures by April 2012.</p>
<p>G2: Promote the Network’s identity as the only objective, comprehensive national source for information on 529 plans (ongoing).</p>	<p>(G2)OBJ1: Position CSPN as the leading national source of 529 plan information (ongoing).</p>	<p>S1: Refine and implement the CSPN national communication strategy.</p> <p>S2: Ensure communication efforts and resources support CSPN’s initiatives and vision.</p> <p>S3: Enhance CSPN’s “thought leadership” with targeted influencers through content creation, innovative perspectives and active engagement.</p>
	<p>(G2)OBJ2: Enhance CSPN’s national visibility and support for individual 529 plan promotional efforts (ongoing).</p>	<p>S1: Integrate multiple ways of communicating and distributing CSPN’s position and key messages.</p> <p>S2: Continue an broad-based national media outreach campaign.</p> <p>S3: Provide national-level support for 529 Day and College Savings Month.</p>

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Goals	Objectives	Strategies
<p>G3: Increase the degree to which all members are actively engaged in Network activities and the fulfillment of its strategic goals (ongoing).</p>	<p>(G3)OBJ1: Promote the value of CSPN and its activities among Network members (ongoing).</p>	<p>S1: Develop a more efficient and timely method for informing members of CSPN’s significant developments and accomplishments by the end of 2012.</p> <p>S2: Enhance the value of participating in Network activities for professional development, including support for obtaining CPE credits (ongoing).</p> <p>S3: Identify and promote member contributions to CSPN’s effectiveness and success (ongoing).</p> <p>S4: Develop a more meaningful recognition program for acknowledging significant member contributions to CSPN by May 2012.</p>
	<p>(G3)OBJ2: Motivate more members to actively engage in and support Network activities (ongoing).</p>	<p>S1: Develop and implement a plan to ensure all members are better informed about Network needs and opportunities to contribute to its mission by May 2012.</p> <p>S2: Establish a development and succession program for emerging leaders by the end of 2012.</p> <p>S3: Establish a mentoring program for new members by the end of 2013.</p>
	<p>(G3)OBJ3: Identify and develop appropriately secure online alternatives to streamline data reports and reduce delays in member reporting by the end of by the end of 2013.</p>	<p>S1: Refine data and reporting requirements based on Network priorities and needs by the end of 2012.</p> <p>S2: Develop and implement appropriately secure online alternatives to streamline data reports and reduce delays in member reporting by the end of 2013.</p>
<p>G4: Establish strategic partnerships to substantially increase savings in 529 plans (ongoing).</p>	<p>(G4)OBJ1: Identify and establish strategic partners (ongoing).</p>	<p>S1: Chair establishes ad hoc Partnership Committee by March 2012.</p> <p>S2: Define potential mutual benefits of a strategic partnership with CSPN by end of 2012.</p> <p>S3: Identify and approach potential strategic partners by end of 2012.</p> <p>S4: Develop and implement a joint program with identified partner(s).</p> <p>S5: Evaluate benefits of partnership for increasing savings in 529 plans and determine next steps.</p>